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Materials for the Study of Elementary Economics. Edited by LEON CARROLL MARSHALL, CHESTER WHITNEY WRIGHT, and JAMES ALFRED FIELD. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1913. Pp. xvii, 927. \$2.75.)

In the last few years discontent has been evident among teachers of economics over at least two matters, namely, the point of view and emphasis prevalent in the subject-matter and the pedagogical methods in use. Widespread interest among American economists in the development of the marginal utility theory and its application to various problems had resulted in undue stress upon marginal theories in textbook and in teaching. While gaining in precision of explanation and scientific statement, economics seemed to be out of touch with the ordinary business of life. Concrete problems were replaced by hypothetical ones of great ingenuity calling for keenness in abstract thinking or in the application of mathematics. The disciplinary value of economic study was undeniable, but the question arose whether equal educational results might not be secured by considering problems that would seem to the student more vital.

On the other hand, the methods used in undergraduate teaching of economics were largely a mere transfer to this field of those forms of instruction with which the college professor had become familiar in his graduate study. Lectures of the German university type, special topics following a long way after the graduate thesis, occasional oral quizzes for detective purposes, were too frequently the pedagogical stock in trade of the college teacher of economics. To a certain extent these conditions were the inevitable result of the inadequacy of teaching force due to the sudden expansion in department enrollment, since the contemporary interest in social problems brought many students to the class room despite the doctrinaire treatment and the dullness of the class hour.

Some of the more recently published American textbooks and larger treatises, while accepting and incorporating the valuable part of modern theorizing, reveal more balance and proportion in treatment, and a return to reality. Contemporaneously there has been much thought about better methods. Fewer lectures and those of a different type; the use of the "recitation" as a means of cultivating independence of thought rather than as a recital of imparted knowledge; problems in class and for out-of-class solution; extensive reading and intensive thinking—these

have been some of the tendencies. Conferences and symposia in the journals have allowed exchange of teaching experience. The members of the department of political economy of the University of Chicago have been leaders in this movement and two or three years ago published *Outlines of Economics*, aiming at a more inductive method of developing elementary principles. They have now published an extensive collection of materials for use in elementary classes. While the source book in economics is not new, it may be said without much fear of contradiction that the present volume is larger in amount, more extensive in range, and more useful in character, than anything yet printed in English and probably in any language.

From all sorts of sources have been selected "expository and descriptive readings, statutes, judicial decisions, the findings of commissions, news reports, statistical tables, schematic analyses, and a number of maps, charts and diagrams." Out of the 267 selections the reviewer has not found one that might not be useful in class work. Suspicion that some of the extracts might be too difficult for elementary classes is allayed by the compilers' statement that all have been tested in actual class-room experiment. There would be doubt in the minds of some teachers regarding the inclusion in elementary courses of certain topics, but the same doubt would arise about the content of most textbooks. There seem to be a few important topics not illustrated. While there are many selections bearing upon the large corporation charter and system of organization, there is nothing upon the relative advantages of different-sized business units under differing conditions of market and customer. Certainly room might have been found for some of the other brilliant passages setting forth popular fallacies regarding consumption, if Bastiat's fable were deemed too hackneyed. Differences in efficiencies of laborers and more of the social reactions upon individual efficiency could easily have been illustrated; but space had its limitations.

While particularly useful for teachers of economics who are trying more inductive pedagogical methods, the *Materials* are the best available illustrative reading for ordinary lectures or textbook courses. Even the economist who is widely read and of long experience in teaching will find much that is helpful and even fascinating in these selections. The compilers have rendered a great service to the teaching of economics.

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